



OCIS NEWS

OXFORD CENTRE FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES

Launch of the Centre’s Project at the Royal Society Public Health, Science and Technology in Muslim Societies

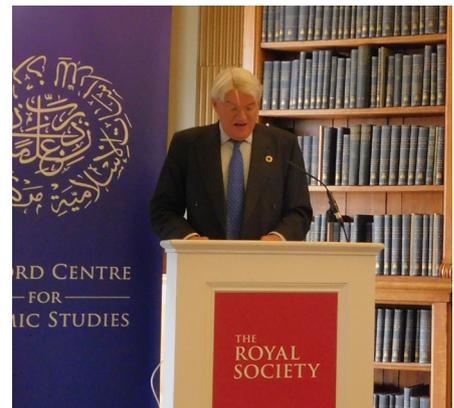
On 7th March 2023 the Centre hosted an event at the Royal Society, London, to launch its Project on ‘Public Health, Science and Technology in Muslim Societies’.

Dr Farhan Nizami, the Director of the Centre, welcomed a gathering of about 75 academics, diplomats and industry experts. Professor Sir David Clary FRS, Senior Advisor to the Project, and Professor Shahid Jameel, Principal Investigator to the Project, introduced the project and its scope. Professor Sir David Clary said that many Muslim countries are putting major effort into science, technology and medicine. A main aim of the new project is to examine these developments and make proposals for future progress. Professor Shahid Jameel outlined the long-term and medium-term goals of the Project and highlighted its current focus on Muslim attitudes to climate change, novel sources of proteins and vaccination.

The inaugural session started with an address by Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP, Minister of State in the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office on, ‘Partnering for Progress: Opportunities in a Changing World’. He noted that “in the early medieval period the extraordinary

intellectual flowering of the Islamic world helped shape the scientific landscape we know today... as with the past, we now look to a future of partnership with the Islamic world, with

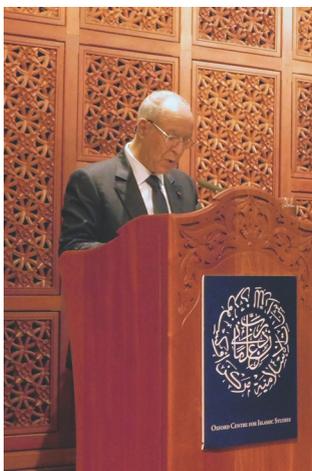
opportunities from the grassroots to the global level... in a world that is not short of division, what better way to build bridges than through collaboration and cooperation.” Following the Minister’s speech Professor Charlotte Watts CMG, Chief Scientific Advisor & Director, Research and Evidence Directorate, FCDO, spoke on “Global health in a challenging world: trends, threats, headwinds and opportunities”.



The Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP delivering the keynote address at the launch event

(continued on page 3)

Roundtable on UK/Morocco: Connecting Two Kingdoms



HE Dr Ahmed Toufiq

The Centre, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco, organized a roundtable discussion on ‘UK/Morocco: Connecting Two Kingdoms, Building on the past to shape the future’.

HE Mr Hakim Hajoui, the Ambassador of Morocco and the Director welcomed over fifty participants to the event. HE Dr Ahmed Toufiq, Minister of Endowments

and Islamic Affairs, Kingdom of Morocco, gave the keynote address. Speakers included HE Assia Bensalah Alaoui, Dr Driss Ouaouicha, Professor Abdellatif Bencherifa, The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, Mr Derek Conway, and Mr Anthony Layden. The roundtable was structured around three panel discussions: the first explored the key elements behind Morocco’s unique model of religious freedom and co-existence; the second panel discussed the political responses to current global issues in the light of Morocco’s foreign policy and the UK’s approach towards regional stability and security; the third panel explored some of the tremendous economic opportunities and the essential role of cultural and human relations in enhancing dialogue and cooperation between the two Kingdoms.

Roundtable on Islamic Architecture

The Centre hosted a roundtable on 'Islamic Architecture in Context: Space and Culture'. The event explored the meaning and key concepts of Islamic architecture and its relationship to the arts and crafts in trying to understand the underlying discourse, beauty and connections within the spatial and intellectual context. It was attended by over 40 people, including academics and members of the public.

The day long event started with presentations by: Professor Salma Samar Damluji (American University of Beirut) on 'Architecture and Culture as a Context', Dr Viola Bertini on 'Earth and Utopia: Hassan Fathy Egyptian Architect (1901-1989) and Professor Nader El-Bizri on 'Philosophical and Scientific Perspectives behind premodern Islamic Architecture'.

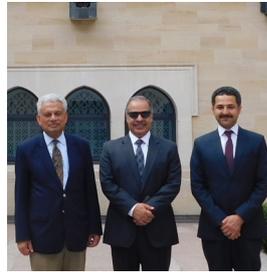
The presentations were followed by a panel discussion led by Professor Damluji, with Dr Bertini, Sultan Al Harithi, Graham Modlen, Ellis Woodman and Dr Karim Lahham among the panellists. The discussions included approaching architecture and the city and validating traditional values in reference to ecology and future challenges through case studies with critical analysis, a vision for the discipline and the paradigm in question.

The day concluded with a tour of the Centre and a buffet lunch.

International Contacts

Bahrain

HE Shaikh Fawaz Al-Khalifa, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain, was hosted at a lunch in his honour at the Centre. The Ambassador



HE Shaikh Fawaz Al-Khalifa with the Director

offered his support for the future activities of the Centre, particularly those involving cooperation with Bahrain. In February, the Director attended the ceremony for the Isa Award for Service to Humanity in Bahrain for which he serves as a jury member.

Malaysia

HRH The Queen of Johor, visited the Centre. After a tour of the Centre's building



HRH The Queen of Johor with Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar

accompanied by the Director and Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar, Visiting Fellow of the Centre, HRH was introduced to the Centre's latest academic activities and discussed potential areas of collaboration with academic institutions in Malaysia.

Saudi Arabia



The delegation with the Director

The Centre received a delegation from Saudi Arabia which included Dr Abdul Rahman Al-Said and Mr Abdulaziz M. Al-Abdulkader, President, Abdulaziz M Al-Abdulkader Group. They toured the new building and discussed the Centre's links and cooperation with scholars and academic institutions in Saudi Arabia.

Qatar

HE Mr Ghanem Al-Ghanem, Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, Qatar, visited the Centre on 12th January. Discussions

were held with the Minister about how further to enhance the Centre's existing strong links with individuals and institutions in Qatar. The Minister was given a tour



HE Mr Ghanem Al-Ghanem with the Director

of the Centre's building and visited the Centre's exhibition to be briefed on the work of the Centre.

Kuwait

In January, the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait, HE Mr Bader Mohammad Alawadi, was invited to visit the Centre. He was welcomed and briefed by the Director on the

close relationship and joint projects between the Centre and Kuwait, followed by a tour of the Centre and in particular the Kuwait Library.



HE Mr Bader Mohammad Alawadi with the Director

Iraq

In March HE Mr Mohammad Jaafar Al-Sadr, Ambassador of the State of Iraq, visited the Centre. He met with members of the Centre over lunch who briefed him about their research areas. The Ambassador expressed admiration and support for the Centre's work, as well as a desire for further collaboration between Iraq and the Centre.



HE Mr Mohammad Jaafar Al-Sadr

Politics and Economics of the Middle East

The Centre hosted a series of seminars on the Politics and Economics in the Middle East in Hilary Term.

Among the speakers was Lord McDonald of Salford, former Permanent Under Secretary in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and British Ambassador in Tel Aviv and Berlin, who spoke on 'Why the Palestinians still don't have a state and why their need is more urgent than ever'. He reviewed the history of a struggle between



Lord McDonald of Salford

two peoples with mutually incompatible narratives and claims, calling for renewed effort at the international level to assist them to resolve their differences.

Professor Sevket Pamuk, widely regarded as the leading global expert on Ottoman and Middle Eastern economic history and professor at Bogazici University, delivered a seminar on 'Turkey's economic development and political economy since 1980'. He highlighted the impact of the Ottoman past on contemporary Turkey. Recounting the major economic achievements of Turkey since 1980, he explained how Turkey's economic transformation since 1980s had ushered in major shifts in its political economy. He also highlighted the major economic and political challenges confronting Turkey today.



Professor Sevket Pamuk

Trinity Term 2023 Lectures & Seminars

The following lectures and seminars will take place during Trinity Term:

Lord Briggs of Westbourne (Justice of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom), *Sultan Azlan Shah Lecture: 'Islamic finance in English law: a level playing field?'*

Professor Paul S. Anderson (University of Cambridge), 'The Social World of Traders: Commerce and Social Differentiation in Pre-conflict Aleppo.'

Dr Rory P. McCarthy (Durham University), 'Tunisia's Democratic Transition: Autonomous Activism and Accountability.'

Professor Peter Mandaville (George Mason University), 'Islam and the East: The New Geopolitics of Religion and Identity.'

Professor Jonathan Phillips, 'Writing the History of Saladin.'

Professor Corinne Lefevre (Centre for South Asian Studies), 'Islam and Empire in India: The Padshah's Sacred Authority and Religious Pluralism in Mughal Times.'

Professor Sheilagh Ogilvie (All Souls College, Oxford), 'Institutions, Guilds, and Economic Prosperity.'

Dr Comfort Ero (International Crisis Group), *Keith Griffin Lecture: 'Negotiating a Violent Terrain: Political Engagement in Sahel and Somalia.'*

Dr Marty Natalegawa (former Foreign Minister of Indonesia), 'ASEAN: Navigating Geopolitical Turbulence in the Indo-Pacific.'

Roundtable on 'Jerusalem Today'

In March a delegation of religious leaders from Jerusalem participated in a roundtable discussion with invited guests including the Bishop of Oxford and senior academics and others with strong interests in the heritage, politics and faith communities of the holy city. The event was opened by the HE Mr Manar Dabbas, Ambassador of Jordan, reflecting the Hashemite Kingdom's custodianship of Jerusalem's holy places. The delegation, including the Episcopal Archbishop and senior representatives from Al Aqsa, was visiting the United Kingdom to raise awareness of the



The delegation, with the Ambassador and the Director continued challenges and harassment facing the Christian and Muslim communities. Animated discussion continued over a dinner hosted by the Director.

(Continued from page 1)

Public Health, Science and Technology in Muslim Societies

Professor Watts noted that the global economic order was changing with extreme poverty endemic in parts of Africa in an era marked by major improvements to public health, the fragility of which was exposed by the pandemic. The Inaugural Session was followed by a Panel Discussion on 'Science and Technology in the Muslim World - Challenges and Opportunities'. It was moderated by Mr. Ehsan Masood, Editorials

Editor and Bureau Chief Africa and Middle East, at Nature. The panel included – Professor Adil Najam, Visiting Fellow at OCIS and Dean Emeritus, Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University; Professor Ghazala Mir, a health inequalities researcher at the University of Leeds; and Dr Rim Turkmani, Research Fellow at the Conflict and Civil Society Research Unit, London School of Economics and Political Science.

BARONESS HALE OF RICHMOND

Baroness Hale of Richmond, former President of the UK Supreme Court and Sultan Azlan Shah Fellow at the Centre, gave a seminar on 'Religious rights and freedom of speech' on 22nd February. The seminar was presided over by Rt Hon Dominic Grieve KC.

DR GHAYTH ARMANAZI

Dr Ghayth Armanazi, former Ambassador of the Arab League to the UK, spoke at the Centre on 'Syria: The Glory and the Agony'. His book on the same theme is due for publication shortly.

13th SC-OCIS Roundtable

Shaping a Stakeholder Economy for the Islamic Capital Market

The 13th annual SC-OCIS Roundtable on Islamic Finance was held in September at the Centre. The topic was 'Shaping a Stakeholder Economy for the Islamic Capital Market'. Dato' Seri Dr Awang Adek Hussin, Executive Chairman Securities Commission Malaysia, and the Centre's Director, Dr Farhan Nizami, spoke at the inaugural session. HRH Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, Sultan of the State of Perak and the Royal Patron for Malaysia's Islamic Finance Initiative delivered a special address.

Several topics were discussed during the roundtable including the role of Maqasid Al-Shariah in evaluating the impact of Islamic Finance on various stakeholders (and the challenges in measuring the Maqasid). Professor Colin Mayer CBE, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford, discussed the



Participants of the SC-OCIS Roundtable

purpose of business; how corporations can create both wealth and social wellbeing, and how we can move from the notion of "shareholder primacy" to "purpose primacy". The two-day event brought together industry practitioners and scholars including former recipients of the SC-OCIS Islamic Finance Visiting Fellowship.

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